GOAT DUNG AS A SOIL AMELIORANT AND YIELD 'STIMULANT' IN COCONUT

N.A. Tennakoon, L.L.W. Somasiri and D.T. Mathes
Coconut Research Institute, Lunuwila.

The danger of indiscriminate and/or continuous application of inorganic fertilizer to the soil which eventually reduces the soil biological activity, has caused concern among both scientists and laymen. Inorganic or artificial fertilizers have no secondary role other than as sources of nutrient concentrates.

In order to study the role of organic manures, a supplementation experiment, commencing in 1983, was carried out on five year old high yielding coconut variety, Dwarf x Tall, where goat dung as the organic source was used in combination with normal fertilizers.

There were overall increases in the various yield parameters during the third year of experimentation. The following increases were observed; 35.2% in nut yields, 40.9% in weight of copra per palm, 20.5% in nuts per bunch and 15.6% increase in total female flower production per tree per year. The increase for copra weight per nut, female flowers per bunch and number of bunches ranged from 6.1% to 10.1%.

Concomitment studies also showed improved activity of microorganisms and changes in soil characteristics to application of goat dung. The results show that goat dung has much scope as an organic fertilizer in coconut cultivation.